



UNSW
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

**Arts and
Social Sciences**

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES & LANGUAGES

ARTS 3270

**HISTORY CAPSTONE:
Reflecting on History and Historians**

SEMESTER 2, 2013

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COURSE STAFF

Convener Details:

Monday group:

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Consultation Times: Wednesdays, 2-4pm

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COURSE DETAILS

The History Capstone course *Reflecting on History and Historians* brings together all students majoring in history for a two-hour weekly seminar. Drawing on students' varied interests and expertise, this course is designed to bring coherence to their previous study of history by requiring them to reflect on the fundamental principles of the discipline and ethical responsibility in the practice of history.

Readings and discussion are focused on developing an appreciation of the importance of historical knowledge for understanding our contemporary world. Students will practise applying principles of the discipline to the various ways in which history is presented to the general public through film, documentary, historical fiction, newspaper reporting, political speeches, school curricula and museum exhibitions. This course counts for 6 UOC (units of credit), and is a compulsory component of a History major.

COURSE AIMS

This Capstone course aims to:

- bring coherence to previous study of history by reflecting on the fundamental principles of the discipline
- lead students to appreciate the importance of historical knowledge for understanding our contemporary world

- guide students in applying principles of the discipline (accuracy of documentation, consideration of perspective, ethical and rational testing of evidence in formulating judgments) to the various ways in which "history" is presented to the general public through film, documentary, historical fiction, newspaper reporting, political speeches, school curricula and museum exhibitions
- encourage students to consider the discipline of history in its relationship to citizenship of both nation and the international community of nations, and the duties of historians in the public realm
- gain further practice in critical thinking and clear expression (both oral and written)
- inspire students to envisage further and lifelong study in history
- highlight the transportability of students' generic and discipline-specific skills into career opportunities
- explore issues of particular interest to students.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of this course students will be able to:

- I. Articulate a clear understanding of major principles in the discipline of history.
- II. Show a good comprehension of ethical responsibilities in the practice of history.
- III. Identify and reflect on multiple forms of history in the public domain, and evaluate them in light of the principles and ethics of the history discipline.
- IV. Demonstrate a high level of research skills through the independent design of a collaborative research project, advanced levels of academic writing, and effective oral presentation of findings.
- V. Reflect on and integrate their own experience(s) as students of history at UNSW.

THRESHOLD LEARNING OUTCOMES

Nationally-agreed TLO (Threshold Learning Outcomes) for History. Upon completion of a Bachelor degree with a major in History, graduates will be able to:

Knowledge	1. Demonstrate an understanding of at least one period or culture of the past. 2. Demonstrate an understanding of a variety of conceptual approaches to interpreting the past. 3. Show how history and historians shape the present and the future.
Research	4. Identify and interpret a wide variety of secondary and primary materials. 5. Examine historical issues by undertaking research according to the methodological and ethical conventions of the discipline.
Analysis	6. Analyse historical evidence, scholarship and changing representations of the past.
Communication	7. Construct an evidence-based argument or narrative in audio, digital, oral, visual or written form.
Reflection	8. Identify and reflect critically on the knowledge and skills developed in their study of history.

LEARNING AND TEACHING RATIONALE

There are no lectures in ARTS3270. The role of the academic teacher is to synthesise a large body of diverse material for students, and assist them in discerning linkages between the course materials and their previous studies in the history of societies or civilisations. In ARTS3270 the seminar format obliges ALL students to take on the intellectual role of a university tutor or lecturer.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

ARTS3270 has two components:

1. An on-campus meeting in a two-hour seminar each week across the teaching semester (usually, Weeks 1–12)
2. The equivalent of a 3rd hour of individual or collaborative work each week. This includes a museum visit and preparation of a poster or PowerPoint presentation that demonstrates an overview of the collaborative research project.

Overall seminars in ARTS3270 encourage active learning by doing, and are intended to encourage students' confidence in public speaking — a skill that is required in many jobs. Seminar discussions and class debates also foster the art of listening, rejoinder, and "thinking on one's feet". This format is designed to allow students to explore ideas, and perhaps even challenge their own preconceptions. Seminars on topics such as fraud and deliberate misrepresentations of history, or on public and political versions of history, have been selected to raise important issues that confront us in our working lives and in our roles as citizens. This course aims to be relevant to students who are about to graduate and leave the University for careers and a new stage in their lives.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Each seminar in this course runs for two (2) hours. The dates in the outline below indicate the Monday and Friday seminars that are offered in Semester 2, 2013.

IMPORTANT: The Monday seminar will NOT meet on 7 October, as it is a public holiday. Alternative arrangements will be made.

THE READINGS LISTED BELOW ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. CORRECT READINGS ARE THOSE LINKED ON MOODLE.

Week 1:

Monday 29 July/Friday 3 August

Introduction.

National standards and being an historian tues 5 march / fri 8 march

The first meeting will involve housekeeping matters. We will also have a discussion about national standards, about what professional historians actually do for a living, and consider some individual experiences.

Tony Becher, "Historians on History", *Studies in Higher Education*, vol.14 (1989), no.3, pp.263–78.

Maya Jasanoff, 'Border-Crossing: My Imperial Routes', *History Workshop Journal*, 64, (2007), pp. 372-381

PART I: Historians and society

Week 2:

Monday 5 August/Friday 9 August

History Wars and History left and right

Every nation seems to have its so-called 'history wars'. In Australia they have recently focused on debates between Keith Windschuttle and historians of aboriginal Australia. Why? What do 'history wars' tell us about how members of public think about history?

Eric Hobsbawm and Niall Ferguson have been the Anglosphere's best-known historians. Hobsbawm was a Marxist who was often accused of failing to account adequately for Communist crimes. Ferguson is an avowed conservative who argues that the British Empire

was, on balance, a good thing. This week we consider the role of political commitment in history writing, and whether politically-committed history can be good history. Are the criticisms leveled against these historians fair?

Readings:

Margaret Macmillan, *The Uses and Abuses of History* (London, 2009), 53-78

Anne Curthoys and John Docker, *Is History Fiction?* (Sydney, 2005), ch. 11, pp. 218-37

E.J. Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes the short twentieth century, 1914-1991* (London, 1995), pp. 372-94, Tony Judt, 'Eric Hobsbawm and the Romance of Communism' in *Reappraisals* (London, 2009), pp 116-28

Niall Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain Made the Modern World* (London, 2003), pp. xi-xxvii

Jon Wilson, 'Niall Ferguson's Imperial Passion', *History Workshop Journal*, 56 (2003), 175-83

Week 3:

Monday 12 August/Friday 16 August

Celebrating or mourning the past: On the public and professional history

Professional historians and public interest groups often have a dramatically different understanding of the past. Consider the controversies that were stirred by the 1492 anniversary celebrations in the United States. Italian Americans and Native Americans have often been at loggerheads on Christopher Columbus. Consider the different roles played here by professional historians.

Required readings:

Bill Bigelow, 'Once upon a Genocide: Christopher Columbus in Children's Literature', *Social Justice/Global Options* 19.2 (1992), 106-21

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, 'Good Day Columbus; Silences, Power and Public History (1492-1892)', *Public Culture* 3.1 (1990), 1-24

Gregory D. Smithers, 'Rethinking Genocide on North America', in Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 322-41

'Saint or criminal? Columbus revisited' *New York Times* (1923-Current File). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/108655317?accountid=12763>

'Columbus runs into storm in Boston' *New York Times* (1923-Current File). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/108857689?accountid=12763>

Week 4:

Monday 19 August/Friday 23 August

Fiction and the historian's boundaries

Peter Gay, Natalie Zemon Davis and Simon Schama are prolific historians who have written about events that did not take place, or might not have taken place. Why did they bother? Or have these historians performed a valuable service?

Readings:

Peter Gay, *The Bridge of Criticism* (New York, 1970), pp. 3-28, 155

Extracts from Simon Schama, *Dead Certainties* (London, 1992)

N.Z. Davis, *Women on the Margins: Three Seventeenth-Century Lives* (Cambridge, Mass., 1995), pp. 1-4

Further Reading:

Cushing Strout, 'Border Crossings: History, Fiction, and Dead Certainties', *History and Theory*, 31.2, 1992, 153-162

Carlo Ginzburg, 'Checking the Evidence: The Judge and the Historian', *Critical Inquiry* 1991, 79-92

Week 5:

Monday 26 August/Friday 30 August

History without books: the documentary

One could argue that books no longer shape the historical imagination. A much greater role is played nowadays by films, documentaries and the Internet. Consider the documentaries of either Ken Burns or Simon Schama. We will screen 15 mins of Schama's *History of Britain* and Burns' *Civil War* and discuss the merits of documentary history.

Required readings:

Justin Champion, 'Seeing the Past: Simon Schama's 'A History of Britain' and Public History', *History Workshop Journal*, Issue 56, 2003, pp. 153-173.

Simon Schama, "History of Britain – A Response", in *Scribble, Scribble, Scribble: Writings on politics, Churchill, Ice-Cream and my mother* (London, 2010), pp. 357-68

Gary Edgerton, 'Ken Burns's Rebirth of a Nation: Television, Narrative and Popular History', in Marcia Landy (ed), *The Historical Film: History and Memory in Media* (New Brunswick, NJ, 2001), pp. 303-315.

Further reading:

Simon Schama, 'Fine-Cutting Clio', *The Public Historian*, 25.3, (Summer, 2003), pp.15-25.

Robert B. Toplin, 'The Filmmaker as Historian', *American Historical Review*, 93.5 (1988), pp.1210-1227

PART II: Approaches to History

Week 6:

Monday 2 September/Friday 6 September

Gender and Women

This week we consider the relationship between ideas of gender and women in particular, and why social ideas are important. Consider Howard and Lerner's critique of historiography. What do we learn from Davis' 'Women on Top'?

Required readings:

Gerda Lerner, "Placing Women in History: Definitions and Challenges", *Feminist Studies*, 3, 1.2 (1975), pp. 5-14

<http://earlymodernnotes.wordpress.com/2005/03/22/womens-gender-history-why/>

Natalie Zemon Davis, 'Women on top', in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 124-51

Week 7:

Monday 9 September/Friday 13 September

The West and History

How do historians respond to writing about cultures other than their own? Western perspectives have dominated written history – what does this mean for historical scholarship? Is it a bad thing to compare cultures? Or can we analyse the past in different regions without reference to Europe?

Require readings:

Roy Bin Wong, "Introduction", *China Transformed: Historical Change and the Limits of European Experience* (Ithaca, NY, 1997) pp.1-8

Arif Dirlik, "Is There History After Eurocentrism?", *Cultural Critique* 42 (1999), pp.1-34

Further Reading:

J. M. Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History* (New York, 2012)

Week 8:

Monday 16 September/Friday 20 September

History from below

"History is written by the winners". How do we approach history by those who were disempowered and disenfranchised? Is it possible to understand the lives of the subalterns of the past? Yet can we fully understand past societies without knowing their lives? It was only in the later twentieth century that historians began to focus on "history from below", and we will read a selection from E. P. Thompson's influential work on the English working class.

Required readings:

E. P. Thompson, "Field Labourers", *The Making of the English Working Class*, pp.213-233.

Jim Sharpe, "History from Below", in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, ed. Peter Burke, (1991), pp.24-41

Week 9:

Monday 23 September/Friday 27 September

Cultural history, modernity and the city

What is modernity? Or what is the modern? What makes the city the harbinger of modernity, and what are the attendant problems? Read Georg Simmel's classic 'The Metropolis and Mental Life' and Peter Fritzsche's study of Berlin society and the role of reading in 1900.

Required readings:

Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life", *American Journal of Sociology*, 44 (1938), pp.1-24.

Georg Simmel, 'The Metropolis and Mental Life', in Jan Lin and Christopher Mele (eds), *Urban Sociology Reader* (London and New York, 2005), pp. 23-31

Peter Fritzsche, *Reading Berlin 1900* (Cambridge, Mass., 1996), pp. 12-50

Week 10:

Friday 11 October. [NOTE: 7 October is a public holiday, so Monday group will not meet]

Scales of history I: deep time

Do historians have any business looking at history before humanity? Should they be considering the Big Bang, as David Christian and Fred Spier have done? What do these

historians claim is the value of such history? What should the starting point of historical inquiry be? The beginnings of earth, hominids, civilization, literate societies or 1900?

Required readings:

David Christian, 'The Return of Universal History', *History and Theory*, 49 (2010), pp. 6-27

Andrew Shyrock And Daniel Lord Smail, 'Introduction' (eds), *Deep History: The Architecture of Past and Present* (Berkeley, California, 20012), pp. 3-20

Further Reading:

David Christian, 'The Case for Big History', *Journal of World History*, Vol. 2, No. 2, (1991) pp.223-38

Fred Spier, 'How Big History Works: Energy Flows and the Rise and Demise of Complexity', *Social Evolution & History*, Vol. 4 No. 1, (March 2005) pp.87-135

Week 11:

Monday 14 October/Friday 18 October

Scales of History II: microscopic

Is there any value in studying history at the local level? Is there any value in the history of everyday life, or which focuses on a single regular person, or on the life of a small and isolated community? When can such studies be deemed to be trivial, and when significant?

Required readings:

Jill Lepore, "Historians Who Love Too Much: Reflections on Microhistory and Biography" *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 88, No. 1 (Jun., 2001), pp.129-144

Robert Darnton, 'The Great Cat Massacre', in Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York, 2009), pp.75-106

Carlo Ginzberg, "Micro-history: Two or Three Things I Know About It", *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 20, No.1 (1993), pp.10-35

Week 12:

Monday 21 October/Friday 25 October

Counterfactual history, Propheying, and what to do with a history major

R.G. Collingwood said that the "historian's business is to know the past, not to know the future, and whenever historians claim to be able to determine the future in advance of its happening, we may know with certainty that something has gone wrong with their fundamental conception of history (Collingwood 1994, 54)." In fact, historians do sometimes pose 'What if?' questions and sometimes do speculate about the future. This week we consider the value of such endeavours, and whether such matters should indeed be the historian's business.

A discussion on what history graduates have done with their degree, and how to go about writing history.

Required readings:

Martin Bunzl, 'Counterfactual History: A User's Guide', *American Historical Review*, 109.3 (2004), pp.845-58

Richard J. Evans, 'Telling it like it Wasn't', *Historically Speaking* 5.4 (2004), 11-14

Ann Curthoys and Ann McGrath, *How to write history that people want to read* (Sydney, 2009), pp.24-47

For examples of counterfactual history, see Robert Crowley (ed), *What if? Eminent Historian Imagine What Might Have Been* (New York, 1998) Niall Ferguson (ed), *Virtual History: Alternatives and Counterfactuals* (London, 1997)

COURSE EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Student evaluative feedback on this course is welcomed and is gathered periodically, using among other means UNSW's Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement (CATEI) process.

Student feedback is taken seriously, and continual improvements are made to the course based in part on such feedback. Significant changes to the course will be communicated to subsequent cohorts of students taking the course.

REFERENCES

There is no reading pack. All weekly readings are available on Moodle.

Students seeking resources can also obtain assistance from the UNSW Library. One starting point for assistance is:

<http://info.library.unsw.edu.au/web/services/services.html>

ASSESSMENT

There are **three** assessment tasks in ARTS3270

Assessment Task	Length	Weight	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed	Threshold Learning Outcomes assessed	Due Date
Research Essay (see note below)	2,500–3,000 words	50.00 %	I, II, III, IV	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	Monday, Week 11
Seminar Preparation & Participation	no more than 15 minutes	25.00 %	I, II, III, V	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	Students will choose a specific seminar
Seminar notes OR class tests		25.00 %	I, II, III, V	1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8	Weekly

NOTE: The Monday group will be assessed with weekly tests, the Friday group will submit reading notes. For the Monday group, each student's best 8 test results will count.

RESEARCH ESSAY:

The research essay is to be written on a historical topic of your choice. You **MUST** have approval for your topic from your class lecturer **BEFORE WEEK 8**.

Assignment Submission

- The cut off time for all assignment submissions in the School is **4pm** of the stated due date.
- 2 assignment copies must be submitted for every assessment task - 1 paper copy and 1 electronic copy.
- All hard/paper copy assessments should be posted into the Assignment Drop Boxes outside the front counter of the School of Humanities and Languages on level 2, Morven Brown Building by 4pm on the due date.
- A completed cover sheet must be securely attached to assignments. The School is not responsible for any missing pages from poorly bound or stapled assignments.
- In addition, a soft copy must be sent through **Moodle** on Turnitin by 4pm on the due date

Assignment Collection

Assignments should be collected from your lecturer/tutor and must be collected by the owner/author of the assignment. A Stamped Self Addressed Envelope must be provided on submission if students require their assignment to be posted back to their home address.

Assignment Extensions

A student may apply to the Lecturer/Tutor for an extension to the submission date of an assignment. Requests for extension must be made via myUNSW before the submission due date, and must demonstrate exceptional circumstances, which warrant the granting of an extension. If medical grounds preclude submission of assignment by due date, contact should be made with subject coordinator as soon as possible. A medical certificate will be required for late submission and must be appropriate for the extension period.

To apply for an extension please log into myUNSW and go to My Student Profile tab > My Student Services channel > Online Services > Special Consideration

Late Submission of Assignments

Assignments submitted after the due or extended date will incur a 5% penalty per day of the maximum marks available for that assignment. Assignments received more than 10 calendar days after the due or extended date will not be allocated a mark.

ATTENDANCE

To successfully complete this unit you are required to attend minimum 80% of classes. If this requirement is not met you will fail the unit. The Tutor will keep attendance records.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

Students seeking information on plagiarism should visit the following web site:

<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/index.html>

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

UNSW's Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Policy requires each person to work safely and responsibly, in order to avoid personal injury and to protect the safety of others.

Any OHS concerns should be raised with your immediate supervisor, the School's OHS representative, or the Head of School. The OHS guidelines are available at:

http://www.ohs.unsw.edu.au/ohs_policies/index.html

STUDENT EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

Students who have a disability that requires some adjustment in their learning and teaching environment are encouraged to discuss their study needs with the course convener prior to, or at the commencement of the course. Alternatively, the Student Equity and Diversity Unit can be contacted on 9385 4734. Further information is available at:

<http://www.studentequity.unsw.edu.au>

GRIEVANCES

All students should be treated fairly in the course of their studies at UNSW. Students who feel they have not been dealt with fairly should in the first instance attempt to resolve any issues with their tutor or the course convenors. If such an approach fails to resolve the matter, the School of Humanities and Languages has an academic member of staff who acts as a Grievance Officer for the School. This staff member is identified on the notice board in the School of Humanities and Languages. Further information about UNSW grievance procedures is available at: <https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/Complaints.html>

OTHER STUDENT INFORMATION

myUNSW is the single online access point for UNSW services and information, integrating online services for applicants, commencing & current students and UNSW staff. To visit myUNSW please visit either of the below links:

<https://my.unsw.edu.au>

<https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/atoz/ABC.html>